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First Committee
13th Meeting
Thursday, 21 October 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Yesterday we had a long discussion, which ended around 2 p.m. It was therefore impossible to give the floor to countries that had requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I apologize to them, but it was obviously impossible to call on them. In accordance with our procedure, statements in exercise of the right of reply are made at the end of the discussion. As we are about to turn to the second stage of our work, I shall call now on the representatives of those countries that wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Lee Kie-cheon (Republic of Korea): In response to the intervention by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at our eleventh meeting, I would like to make a few remarks, in exercise of the right of reply, to set the record straight.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), has a legal obligation to comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreements. The 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework in no way released the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from this Treaty obligation. Despite the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea recognized in the Agreed Framework that it remains a party to the NPT, it has so far failed to comply fully with the IAEA safeguards agreements. It is imperative that, as a party to the NPT, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abide by its Treaty obligations by fully and faithfully implementing the agreements.

The Security Council, through its presidential statement of 1 November 1994, and the General Assembly of the United Nations and the IAEA General Conference, through the adoption of relevant resolutions every year since 1995, have repeatedly called upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its Treaty obligations and fully cooperate with the IAEA. In this regard, the adoption without a vote of the resolution at the General Conference of the IAEA in September on the implementation of the safeguards agreements in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represents a unanimous call of the international community to that effect.

It goes without saying that the Republic of Korea remains a party directly concerned with the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea confirmed this by agreeing to the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which entered into force in 1992. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond positively to the call of the international community by fully complying with its legal obligations as a party to the NPT and to the Joint Declaration.

Mr. Kim Sam Jong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to respond briefly to the remarks of my South Korean colleague. We believe that South Korea

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has no right to speak about the Korean peninsula nuclear issue. I should like to give two reasons.

First, that issue originated from the nuclear threat against the North and the nuclear umbrella for the South created by the United States. The South Koreans are still interested in collaborating militarily with the United States, presenting nuclear threats to the North and begging for a nuclear umbrella. As long as nuclear threats continue and there is a nuclear umbrella on the Korean peninsula, its denuclearization can never be realized. Therefore, we consider South Korea's talking about the nuclear issue is nothing but hypocrisy.

Secondly, the Korean peninsula nuclear issue must be discussed and resolved between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. This is proved by the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States have been maintaining bilateral channels for talks since 1993, whether in New York, Geneva, Berlin or elsewhere. Accordingly, there is no reason for the South Koreans to poke their noses into the nuclear issue.

Mr. Lee Kie-cheon (Republic of Korea): I am very sorry to have to take the floor again in exercise of the right of reply. Since I spoke in order for the Committee to establish an accurate picture of the issues involved, I will refrain from repeating myself. I would like to simply emphasize that the intervention of the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was incorrect, misleading and somewhat distorted. Apart from the international obligation to fully comply with the IAEA safeguards agreements, the General Framework also clearly stipulates that

> "The DPRK will consistently take steps to implement the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula"

and, in article IV, 1, that

> "The DPRK will remain a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and will allow implementation of its safeguards agreement under the Treaty."

Mr. Aribi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I support what the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt said the day before yesterday regarding the text distributed by Mr. José Bustani, the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). My delegation agrees with Syria that Mr. Bustani should be neutral and objective; he should respect the sovereignty of Member States and emphasize the technical aspects of the question, in accordance with his mandate. He should not get involved in political issues. We are against double standards and selectivity on arms and disarmament issues, and we do not oppose the Chemical Weapons Convention. We refrain from the production of any such weapons, and are incapable of producing them, even for self-defence against aggression and occupation. We are interested in creating a better world, in which peace and security can reign.

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with our programme of work, the Committee will now begin the second stage of its work. This stage is rather flexible, as it was last year, in accordance with the adopted decision on the rationalization of the Committee's work. We shall combine the discussion of specific subjects and the introduction or consideration of all draft resolutions, so that sufficient time is allowed for informal consultations and discussions on all draft resolutions. I suggest that delegates inscribe their names on the list of speakers for specific meetings, if possible, so that we may organize future meetings.

Mr. Antonov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Ambassador Sergey Lavrov, in a statement to the First Committee on 13 October explained clearly and concisely what led this delegation, together with the delegations of Belarus and China, to formulate draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1 "Preservation of and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty". In introducing it now, I would like to present some additional arguments designed to help other delegations understand the rationale behind it and consequently gain it the broadest possible support.

First, the draft is not of a confrontational nature. It is based on the language of the Treaty itself and on joint statements of the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States on the topic. It is not targeted against any country and does not infringe upon anybody's interests. It has a clearly declared and unambiguously constructive objective — to guarantee the preservation and strengthening of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty through strict and full compliance.

Secondly, it would be a delusion to consider the problem of preservation and strict compliance with the ABM Treaty as a purely bilateral affair in which no one other than the parties should interfere. For more than a quarter of a century already, the Treaty has been a cornerstone of strategic stability and international security, providing conditions for the process of nuclear arms reduction. It was the ABM Treaty that created the fundamental strategic prerequisites for the conclusion of a number of treaties, including the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, START I and START II. Moreover, nuclear disarmament, which had been an abstract idea before, acquired the status of one of the priority practical objectives of the international community.

Both nuclear disarmament and the future of the ABM Treaty, in their profound logical interrelationship, concern all the countries of the world, with no exception. This gives our co-sponsors and all of us reasons to raise at the General Assembly the issue of the preservation of and strict compliance with the ABM Treaty.

Thirdly, undermining or liquidating the ABM Treaty would make impossible the fulfilment of both START I and START II, as well as the continuation of the process of reducing strategic offensive weapons. More than that, the whole system of international arms control agreements would collapse. The regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and means of their delivery would be undermined. Nuclear disarmament, which has lately become so possible and real, would again become an elusive dream. Our country wishes to do everything possible to prevent such a catastrophic follow-up.

Fourthly, our draft resolution follows the mainstream of agreements between the Presidents of Russia and the United States reached in Cologne in June 1999 regarding strategic offensive and defensive weapons and further strengthening of stability. As is noted in the Cologne Joint Statement,

> "Proceeding from the fundamental significance of the ABM Treaty for further reductions in strategic offensive arms, and from the need to maintain the strategic balance between the United States of America and the Russian Federation, the Parties reaffirm their commitment to that Treaty, which is a cornerstone of strategic stability, and to continuing efforts to strengthen the Treaty, to enhance its viability and effectiveness in the future."

The Presidents of Russia and the United States also stated:

> "strategic stability can be strengthened only if there is compliance with existing agreements between the Parties on limitation and reduction of arms."

That, of course, also fully applies to the ABM Treaty.

Fifthly, it is a false notion that the Russian party is ready to discuss review of the ABM Treaty, much less its core provision, article I, under which the parties undertake not to deploy ABM systems for defence of the territory of their countries, and not to provide a base for such defence. The abandonment of this commitment would deprive the Treaty of any sense.

The Cologne Joint Statement does not contain any agreement to review the Treaty. In order to make this absolutely clear, I quote here the full text of the respective paragraph from the Statement:

> "both Parties affirm their existing obligations under Article XIII of the ABM Treaty to consider possible changes in the strategic situation that have a bearing on the ABM Treaty and, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of this Treaty."

Hence, there is no other intention here than to confirm one of the Treaty's provisions.

Sixthly, in Cologne the parties agreed to begin discussions on the START III and ABM Treaties. However, our understanding as regards the latter Treaty is that this can only mean its preservation and strict compliance with it, in order to ensure the necessary conditions for the agreements within the START III framework. As has already been stated, the destruction of the ABM Treaty would reduce to nothing any prospects for new agreements on strategic offensive weapons.

Seventhly, we, of course, do not request the General Assembly to give any instructions to the Russian Federation or the United States as to the current dialogue between them. Both we and our co-sponsors wish only that the General Assembly would confirm the importance of preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty through strict, full compliance. We are convinced that nobody can discredit this noble objective, which has been repeatedly confirmed in the most influential bilateral and multilateral international documents. The latest example is the statement

of the Foreign Ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council of 23 September 1999, following a meeting with the Secretary-General, in which they

> "called for continued efforts to strengthen the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and to preserve its integrity and validity, so that it remains a cornerstone in maintaining global strategic stability and world peace and in promoting further strategic nuclear arms reduction." (*S/1999/996, annex I, para.8*)

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks the representative of the Russian Federation for his introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1, "Preservation of and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty". It was on the basis of China's consistent position on this issue that the Chinese delegation decided to join the sponsors. I wish to make some comments on the draft resolution and related questions.

The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is the cornerstone of the structure for the maintenance of global strategic balance and stability today. Over the past 30 years or so it has helped bring about a relative balance and stability of forces between the States parties by limiting the development and deployment of ABM systems for defence of their territory. During the cold war the Treaty played a pivotal role in preventing the nuclear arms race between the United States and the former Soviet Union from getting out of control. Now, in the post-cold-war era, the Treaty, by restraining States parties with respect to anti-ballistic missile systems, makes possible the bilateral reduction of nuclear arms by the United States and the Russian Federation, and furnishes the necessary security framework for movement on the multilateral nuclear disarmament front.

Although the Treaty is bilateral in nature, its important role in maintaining global strategic stability, pushing forward nuclear disarmament and promoting international security has been universally recognised. The ABM Treaty is, however, now confronted with great challenges, flowing from some recent negative developments in the international situation. In seeking its own absolute security and strategic advantage, a State party to the Treaty is not only vigorously pursuing its own national missile defence programme, but also accelerating joint research into and development of theatre missile defence systems with a few other countries. Such moves not only fly in the face of the Treaty's purposes and principles, but are also very much at odds with its core provisions.

The real motive behind the repeated requests from that State party to amend the Treaty is to remove the legal barriers in order to legitimize its development and deployment of national missile defence systems. It is certain that once an amendment is made to the Treaty there could be many more to come, as a result of so-called changes in the situation, and ultimately the Treaty would be annulled; it would be a dead letter, existing in name only. This should naturally arouse the vigilance and grave concern of the international community.

We believe that revising the Treaty in pursuance of national missile defence would have a wide and far-reaching adverse impact globally.

First, such a move would have a severe negative impact on the global strategic balance and stability. Since the ABM Treaty has, since its conclusion, served as the cornerstone for the maintenance of the global strategic balance and stability, to amend it in pursuit of national missile defence would undermine the global strategic stability, trigger a new round of the arms race and put world and regional stability in jeopardy.

The history of the past century has demonstrated that the security of one country is often linked to that of others. A country can enjoy genuine security only when that security is built on the common security of all countries. The basis for security should be the mutual trust and shared interests of all countries.

If a country, with its economic prowess and scientific and technological advantages, vigorously pursues missile defence and far too frequently uses or threatens to use force in international affairs, such moves to seek absolute military superiority and put one's own security above that of others will do no good to the relaxation of the international situation. On the contrary, they will only undermine the global strategic balance and stability and deprive all other countries of their sense of security.

In a world in which every country feels insecure, all countries will seek all possible means to protect themselves, and the military factor will play an ever greater role in international relations. As a result, large amounts of financial and material resources that could otherwise be devoted to economic development will be used for a military build-up. If that happens, who will feel secure, and how can the world ever be a stable place?

Secondly, such a move would seriously hinder the nuclear disarmament process. The relative balance of forces

among major Powers in the world and the global strategic stability based upon it represent the precondition for nuclear disarmament. If such balance and stability were shattered, the nuclear disarmament process would come to a halt or even be reversed. The mutual restraint of the States parties to the Treaty with regard to anti-ballistic missile systems has created the necessary conditions for the reduction of offensive strategic weapons and thus provided a guarantee of further progress in nuclear disarmament. This Treaty and the progress in the series of START negotiations led to the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the understanding achieved in the fissile materials cut-off treaty negotiations.

To pick up the pace of the nuclear disarmament process, the international community should maintain this momentum. However, if a certain country is bent on making substantive amendments to the Treaty with a view to legitimizing its deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems, then the precondition for strategic stability will no longer be there, and the security environment will undergo major changes. Under such circumstances, who can guarantee that existing treaties will continue to be implemented or that existing understandings will still stand? Who can guarantee that the negotiations we are to embark on will still proceed smoothly?

Nuclear disarmament will be impossible in the absence of an international environment of peace, security, stability and trust. The development and proliferation of sophisticated missile defence systems will obviously jeopardize the international nuclear disarmament endeavour. It will only poison the atmosphere, undermine the conditions needed for nuclear disarmament and raise the potential danger of a new arms race to a higher level.

The nuclear disarmament process between the United States and the Russian Federation is already at a standstill, with uncertain prospects for multilateral nuclear disarmament. Against this backdrop, we firmly believe that the international community should be even more resolute in its pursuit of the ultimate goal of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. Once nuclear weapons are eliminated there will be no nuclear proliferation, let alone proliferation of long-range missiles and missile threats. So, in the final analysis, to exert greater efforts in the disarmament process, instead of doing otherwise, represents a correct approach if we are to reduce the threat to peace. In the current situation, it is imperative that attempts to amend and violate the ABM Treaty be checked, so as to preserve its integrity and effectiveness. This is of the utmost importance for maintaining the momentum for nuclear disarmament and pushing forward the nuclear disarmament process.

Thirdly, such a move would also disrupt international non-proliferation efforts. Nuclear disarmament constitutes the prerequisite for non-nuclear States to honour their commitment to staying non-nuclear. To amend the Treaty would legitimize the development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems. If such attempts were to prevail, the prerequisite and basis for nuclear disarmament would no longer be there. Under such circumstances, who can guarantee that other countries will not go back on their promises to stay non-nuclear?

The use of large numbers of missiles by some military Powers in Kosovo furnishes ample evidence of missiles' military effectiveness in today's world. It was undoubtedly the best advertisement for such weapons. So it is our view that the countries that have aggravated missile proliferation are precisely those military Powers that have paid lip service to non-proliferation.

Moreover, given that the technologies for missiles and anti-missiles are interrelated and mutually convertible, many of the technologies used in anti-missile systems can be adapted to develop and improve offensive missiles. In this context, to develop anti-missile systems, instead of checking missile proliferation, will only add to the dangers of missile proliferation and thus make the Missile Technology Control Regime even more ineffective.

With all that in view, China maintains that it is the responsibility of the international community to take every necessary step, including calling for full and strict compliance with the Treaty by all States parties, in order to preserve the integrity and effectiveness of the ABM Treaty and to ensure that it will remain as the cornerstone for maintaining global strategic stability and promoting nuclear disarmament.

We believe that it is fitting, timely and absolutely necessary for the General Assembly at this session to review this issue, since, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, it may discuss issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by a Member of the United Nations. Any amendment of the Treaty would undermine global strategic stability and balance, with severe consequences for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation endeavours, thus jeopardizing the security of the entire international community. The draft resolution presented by the Russian

Federation on the defence of and compliance with the ABM Treaty is aimed at promoting and maintaining international peace and security.

The General Assembly, therefore, has both the right and the duty to discuss this important issue. China, as a sponsor of the draft resolution, will make tireless efforts, together with other countries, to seek its adoption at the current session, and to promote the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

Ms. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Mr. Maged Abdelaziz, Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for the 1999 session, and the other sponsors, who are traditionally members of its Bureau, I am honoured to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3, "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

The draft resolution is the result of consultations between members of the Disarmament Commission. It has been drafted like the draft resolutions adopted in previous years on the same item, with changes that reflect present circumstances. I should like to point out some paragraphs which contain those changes.

The second preambular paragraph has been updated, with a reference to resolution 53/79 A, adopted last year. The new fourth preambular paragraph includes a reference to decision 52/492, adopted on 8 September 1998.

Following three years of deliberation, the Commission adopted by consensus a text on two items: "The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned" and "Guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace in the context of General Assembly resolution 51/45 N of 10 December 1996". Operative paragraph 2 recognizes the success that the Disarmament Commission has had.

At the same time, the Commission was unable to resolve the existing differences regarding the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That issue, despite its importance, and a three-month extension of the time to discuss it, was still unresolved, at least by us. Operative paragraph 3 recognizes that fact.

At its substantive session in 1999 the Disarmament Commission concluded consideration of the three items on its agenda. In accordance with the decision adopted under the rationalization of the work of the Disarmament Commission, at its resumed session in 2000 it will have two items on its agenda: one on nuclear disarmament and the second on other disarmament matters. As has been the practice, the Disarmament Commission will continue to consider this question at its organizational session at the beginning of next December. As requested by the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, as well as the other members of the Bureau, informal consultations are to be held on this point. I intend to continue the consultation process with the greatest number of delegations possible and to submit the results at the open-ended meeting to be convened before the organizational session. As a result, the contents of subparagraphs (a) and (b) of operative paragraph 7 will be added later.

As the Committee knows, the Disarmament Commission met for three weeks and one day. In the past, that additional day created some difficulty for some delegations participating in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Decision 52/492, adopted by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the First Committee, established that the substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission would not exceed three weeks. That decision will be applied as of the year 2000. However, the 1999 substantive session lasted three weeks, and all went well. Operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution reflects this new reality. By that paragraph the General Assembly would request the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2000, in accordance with decision 52/492.

The rest of the draft resolution is similar to draft resolutions adopted in previous years.

We hope that, with its slight changes and additions, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3 will receive consensus support from delegations, as similar draft resolutions have in the past.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I remind delegations that tomorrow is the last day for the submission of draft resolutions. This is a deadline which will not be postponed or deferred.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.